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Thursday, March 31, 2016 metro.us | t: MetroNewYork | f: MetroNewYork

Spring has sprung — here are the best spots to see NYC in full bloom. 22

TOM HIDDLESTON GOES COUNTRY

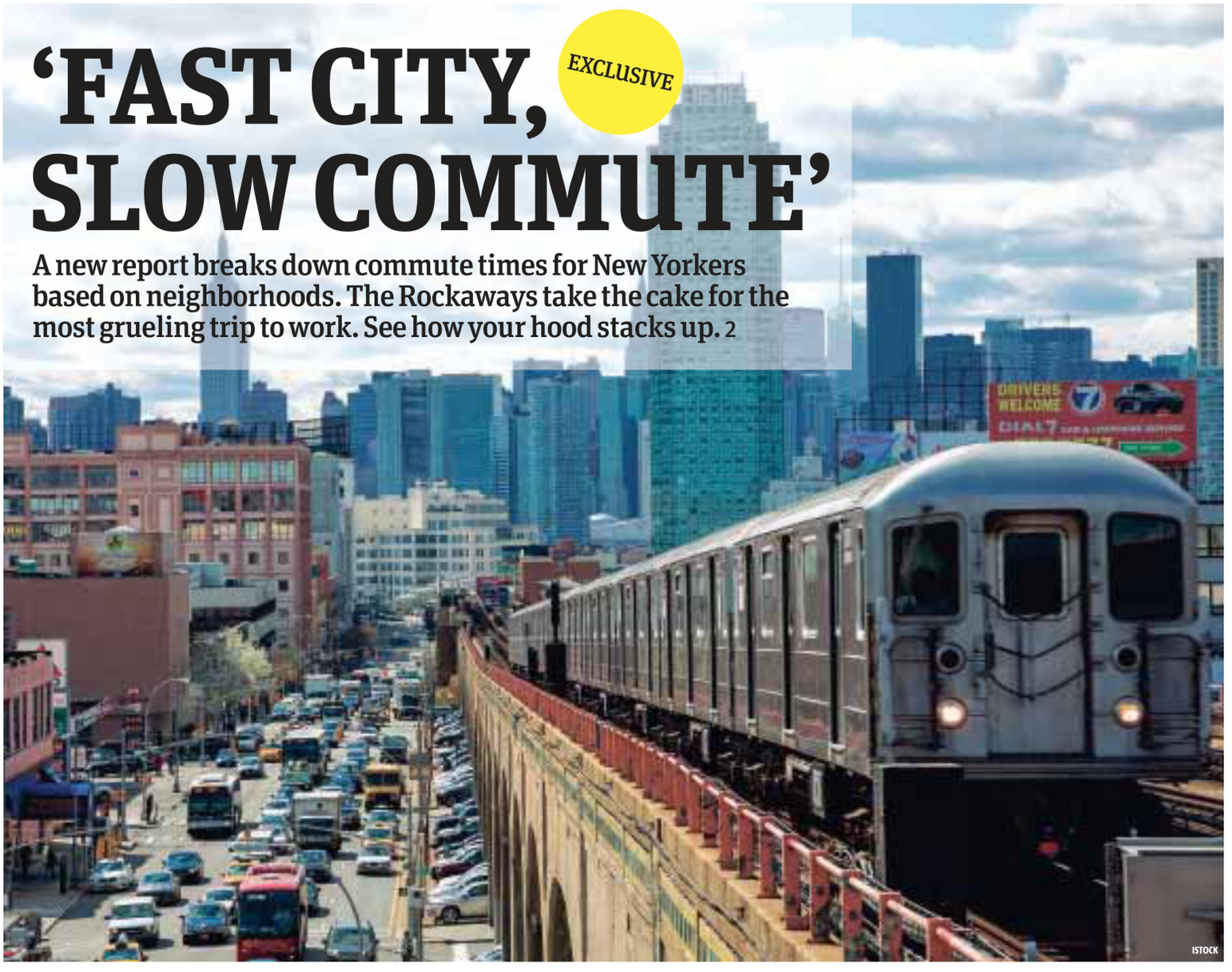
The actor takes on Hank Williams in his new film. 19

Fantasy baseball advice. 26

‘FAST CITY, SLOW COMMUTE’

EXCLUSIVE

A new report breaks down commute times for New Yorkers based on neighborhoods. The Rockaways take the cake for the most grueling trip to work. See how your hood stacks up. 2



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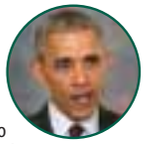
3 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

OBAMA COMMUTES 61 SENTENCES, BRINGING TOTAL TO 248



President Barack Obama on Wednesday commuted the sentences of 61 federal prisoners serving time for drug crimes, bringing his total commutations to 248 individuals, which the White House said was more than the previous six presidents combined. The move reflects Obama's push to reform the criminal justice system to reduce the number of people serving long sentences for nonviolent drug crimes, reforms that have garnered bipartisan support from lawmakers. "Throughout the remainder of his time in office, the president is committed to continuing to issue more grants of clemency as well as to strengthening rehabilitation programs," White House Counsel Neil Eggleston said in a blog post announcing the decision. REUTERS

US JURY FINDS GM IGNITION SWITCH WAS DEFECTIVE

2 General Motors sold vehicles with a defective ignition switch, but the part was not to blame for a 2014 car accident, a jury found on Wednesday in the first verdict since the company was forced to recall millions of vehicles. The verdict in a two-week trial in Manhattan was announced after the eight jurors deliberated less than a day to decide that a Saturn Sky in the car crash on a bridge in New Orleans was "unreasonably dangerous" and that GM failed to warn the public about its safety risks. The case was selected to serve as a bellwether, or test, for several hundred similar injury and death cases involving the switch, which can slip out of place, causing engines to stall and cutting power to the brake, steering and air bag systems. REUTERS

SAMSUNG REDISCOVERING ITS MOBILE MOJO WITH GALAXY S7

3 Early indications of stronger-than-expected sales of new Galaxy S7 smartphones suggest technology giant Samsung Electronics Co. is emerging from a two-year decline at its flagship mobile business. Squeezed by Apple in premium products and undercut by Chinese rivals like Huawei in cheaper devices, Samsung's smartphone profits and global market share have fallen and sapped momentum at South Korea's most valuable company. But several brokerages Wednesday upgraded first-quarter forecasts for what is still the world's top smartphone maker, citing a strong start for the Galaxy S7 and S7 edge premium phones that were launched earlier this month. REUTERS

Commute times vary widely for New Yorkers. GETTY IMAGES

Exclusive: Report breaks down NYC commute times

All but one of the city's 55 "Census-defined" neighborhoods see average commute times that go over the national average of 26 minutes.

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If you are a New Yorker there is one thing you know best — commuting takes up a good chunk of your day and one new report breaks down just exactly how much time you take to and from the office.

The Center for an Urban Future this week is releasing a report, called "Fast City, Slow Commute," that examines average commute times for New Yorkers based on where they live and in which industry they work in.

According to data from the report, all but one of the city's 55 "Census-defined" neighborhoods sees average commute times that go over the national average of 26 minutes. About 69 percent of the neighborhoods see an average commute time exceeding 40 minutes.

The report is the first to break down commute times for New Yorkers based on the borough and neighborhood they live in.

Commute times: Out of the 10 neighborhoods with the longest commute times, four are in Brooklyn, four in Queens and two are in the Bronx.

From those with the shortest commutes, all but one is in Manhattan.

Based on the data, the neighborhoods with the longest commutes are the Rockaways, with 53 minutes; Jamaica, with 51 minutes; Brownsville/Ocean Hill, with 48 minutes; Flatlands/Canarsie, with 48 minutes; and Bellerose/Rosedale, with 47 minutes.

79%
PERCENT OF JOBS IN NEW YORK FILLED BY RESIDENTS

Commute methods: The way people get to work varies by neighborhood. Even with 59 percent of New Yorkers using mass transit to get to work, residents in 10 of the city's 55 neighborhoods, commuters depend on cars or taxis.

These neighborhoods include three in Staten Island, six in Queens and one in the Bronx.

In six other neighborhoods, more than 20 percent of commuters either walk or ride a bicycle to work. These include Stuyvesant Town, Chelsea/Midtown, the Lower East Side, Greenwich Village/FiDi, Upper East Side and Borough Park.

Commute shirkers: Many New Yorkers avoid commuting completely. In six neighborhoods – the Upper West Side, Park Slope/Carroll Gardens, Chelsea/Clinton/Midtown, Stuyvesant Town/Turtle Bay, Greenwich Village/Financial District and Brooklyn Heights/Fort Greene – more than 7 percent of employed residents mainly work from home. Oddly, neighborhoods that are closer to job centers and have the better transit options tend to see the highest share of residents working from home.

Live near work: New Yorkers were more likely to commute to work in the borough they live in. In the Bronx, 41 percent of residents work in the borough, while 38 percent work in Manhattan. For Queens it is 41 percent versus 35 percent. Brooklyn sees 49 percent versus 37 percent, and in Staten Island, 52 percent stay in their borough versus 22 percent who opt to go out.

Queens residents were the most likely to work outside the city, with 13 percent commuting to jobs outside the city.

Commute patterns: The report also analyzed commuting patterns among various industries and found that in several areas a large number of employees do not live in New York.

In the city's utilities sector, 40 percent commute from outside of the city; 38 percent from the finance and insurance sector; and 30 percent from the government sector.

The finance and insurance industry is the one that sees the longest average commute, with 51 minutes.

Working from home

The number of those who work from home has increased from 2000 to 2014 by:

- **Bronx**: 40%
- **Brooklyn**: 37%
- **Queens**: 28%
- **Staten Island**: 28%
- **Manhattan**: 18%

Cycling fans

Based on the report, the five neighborhoods with the highest amount of bicycle-riding commuters are:

- Lower East Side/Chinatown
- Greenwich Village/Financial District
- North Crown Heights/Prospect Heights, Brooklyn Heights/Fort Greene and Park Slope/Carroll Gardens.

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Heartbroken mother seeks justice for son fatally shot in Brooklyn

After not hearing from her son, who also did not show up for work, Allison Shinn knew something was wrong.

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Bedford-Stuyvesant mother Allison Shinn and her son A'mani Miller ended their phone call on March 14 just like every day — by saying they loved each other. Little did Shinn know that those would be the last words she'd ever hear from her son, and her life would never be the same.

That day, at about 2:30 p.m., 23-year-old Miller was found face down in the stairwell of the Bayview Houses in Canarsie with a gunshot wound to the head and cuts around his body, CBS2 New York reported. Emergency personnel pronounced him dead at the scene.

According to Shinn, just earlier that day she had spoken with her son, who was on the clock working as a delivery man for a construction company.

She told him she'd speak to him later because she didn't like him talking on the phone while he was driving.

Miller **PROVIDED**

"Our whole family is broken. I have a broken heart that is never going to go away."
Shinn

"We both said that we loved each other and that was it," Shinn said. "He called me every day and when he didn't call and he didn't show up for work I knew there was something wrong."

After not hearing from her son, Shinn decided to call the police, who later found Miller's delivery vehicle by 2125 Rockaway Parkway. Shinn said authorities then checked at local precincts to see if there was information on Miller.

Police then told Shinn they had found an unknown man and took her into the precinct — where she identified her son's body.

"They showed me a picture and I said that was him," she said.

The NYPD later released surveillance video of a livery cab captured passing in front of the housing development during the time of the crime.

According to CBS2, police believe the black Town Car might be the vehicle the killers may have used and hope the driver could lead to the suspects.

However, Shinn said that because the crime happened in the middle of the afternoon she believes someone must have heard or seen something. She's asking the public to help find those responsible for the death of her beloved son.

"I just want somebody who heard or who saw something to just say something," she said. "They'll remain anonymous, they don't have to be scared. I just want them to do the right thing. If it was someone that they love and their son, they would want that to be done for them."

Shinn added that the whole family is confused why Miller was at the Bayview Houses on the day of his death because, from what she knew, he had no friends or family who lived in that area.

On that day Miller had picked up all the supplies he was supposed to but never showed up to deliver them. The construction company he worked for also has no information as to why he was at the Brooklyn housing development.

"I'm confused and I don't understand because he didn't deserve it. I don't know why anyone would want to do this to him," she said. "Our whole family is broken. I have a broken heart that is never going to go away."

Shinn said Miller — who still lived with his family at their Bed-Stuy home — had no criminal record and was "overall a good kid."

He enjoyed playing video games on the weekends, loved music and aspired to get into a career in music to become famous and later on open a chain of hotels.

"He loved his family, he loved his friends. … He was my pride and joy," she said, holding back tears. "His goal was to bring all his family together."

There is a $3,500 reward for any information leading to the arrest of Miller's killers, and the reward money is expected to increase, Shinn said. A GoFundMe campaign has also been started to raise money in Miller's name.

Shinn added that she asks anyone who might have information to not be afraid and to help bring justice to her son.

"I just want justice for him, my heart is broken," she said. "He's not coming back but I don't want this to happen to anyone else."

Anyone with information in regards to this incident is asked to call the NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at 1-800-577-TIPS (8477) or for Spanish, 1-888-57-PISTA (74782).

The public can also submit their tips by logging onto the Crime Stoppers website or by texting their tips to 274637 (CRIMES) then enter TIP577.

Man blows kisses to subway rider, allegedly touches himself on J train in Brooklyn: NYPD

Police are asking for the public's help in identifying a man they say touched himself on a Brooklyn subway last week while staring down a stranger.

On March 24 at about 3:30 p.m., while inside a southbound J train at the Myrtle-Broadway subway station, the suspect blew kisses to a 27-year-old woman, according to authorities.

He then allegedly placed his hands down his pants and touched his genitalia while staring at the woman, police said.

Cops have released photos of the suspect who is described as a white man in his 60s, unshaven and with white hair. He was last seen wearing a black jacket, blue sweater, black pants and dark-colored sneakers with red shoelaces.

Anyone with information in regard to this incident is asked to call the NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at 1-800-577-TIPS (8477) or for Spanish, 1-888-57-PISTA (74782).

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The suspect **PROVIDED**

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New York mulls two-tier min. wage in push for $15 per hour

People rally for a $15 minimum wage. BESS ADLER

New York Democrats want to raise the minimum wage, which at the federal level has remained at $7.25 an hour for more than six years.

Officials negotiating New York's budget are considering capping the minimum wage in less affluent regions so they can raise it to $15 per hour in wealthier areas like New York City, according to top-ranking lawmakers.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, a Democrat, has made a $15 statewide hourly minimum wage a priority and is trying to push it through with the state's $145 billion fiscal spending plan, which is due at the start of the state's fiscal year Friday.

While Democrats, who control the Assembly, support a $15 minimum wage, Republicans, who have a majority in the Senate, are less enthusiastic. They fear an increase from its current $9 per hour could hurt businesses in less prosperous areas, mainly in the northern, or "upstate" reaches of New York.

Introducing a two-tier system that caps the wage at $12.50 or $13 upstate could emerge as a compromise solution.

New York Democrats want to raise the minimum wage, which at the federal level has remained at $7.25 an hour for more than six years, to help the working poor, stimulate demand for goods and services and provide a boost for the party come election time in November.

Cuomo did not rule out a two-tier system during a press briefing in Albany on Tuesday, saying it was important to get the "calibration" right to take into account the different economic situations in different parts of the state.

John Flanagan, the Republican majority leader of the Senate, said "no" late on Tuesday when asked by reporters if there was a minimum wage deal.

Flanagan spoke after a meeting with Cuomo and Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie, adding there was still work to be done on the education budget and outstanding issues involving Medicaid spending.

Both the Senate and the Assembly were adjourned until Wednesday afternoon while the dealmaking continues.

The two-tier plan is being floated to New York lawmakers by the tight knit group negotiating the budget, according to Sen. Liz Krueger, the No. 2 Democrat in the Senate.

Krueger said the "rumored negotiating place" was to move to a $15 minimum wage sooner in New York City, have a longer phase-in for counties in Long Island and Westchester and not "even try to get to $15 in the rest of the state."

Final budget negotiations in New York are carried out behind closed doors by the majority leaders from both chambers and the governor in an arrangement known as the "three men in a room." Legislation that is not a core part of the spending plan, such as the minimum wage, is often packaged together with the budget.

Sen. Andrea Stewart-Cousins, the leader of the Democratic minority in the Senate, said she was approached about her support for capping the minimum wage upstate. While she did not rule it out she said she would "have difficulty" accepting anything but an equal minimum wage statewide.

New York's effort dovetails with a similar proposal in California. On Monday, California Gov. Jerry Brown announced that he agreed a deal with legislative and labor leaders to raise the minimum wage to $15 an hour by 2023 in an effort to raise pay for the working poor. REUTERS

Bronx man arrested in Vermont with 1,428 bags worth of heroin in his body

A New York man was charged with drug trafficking and other crimes after authorities in Vermont discovered the equivalent of more than 1,400 bags of heroin hidden in his body, state police said on Wednesday.

Fernando Estrella, 41, of the Bronx was pulled over by officers in St. Albans City, Vermont, on Tuesday for numerous motor vehicle violations. During the stop, a sniffer dog indicated the presence of drugs, Vermont State Police said in a press release.

No drugs were found in the vehicle, and police sought a warrant for a body cavity search of Estrella, the release said.

At a nearby hospital, "approximately 1,428 bags worth of heroin was located in Estrella", the release said.

It did not make clear how the drugs were hidden.

Estrella faces several charges including heroin trafficking and violating conditions of release from prison for a previous drug offense, state police said.

It was unclear if Estrella had obtained an attorney or how he intends to plead to the charges. REUTERS

Fernando Estrella PROVIDED

BRIEF

Watch a large New York City subway rat crawl on a sleeping passenger's neck

A newly shot video shows a large New York City subway rat crawling on the neck of a sleeping passenger.

The video, captured by Antony Lin on a Queens-bound 7 train around 3 a.m. on Sunday, was posted to Instagram, according to NBC4, and was not planned as a practical joke.

"I had my phone ready to film the rat since it was huge and the fact that it ended up inside the subway," Lin said to NBC4. "So I see the rat crawl onto the guy and zoomed in."

The man whose neck the rat was crawling on was awoken by the rodent, according to CBS2, which added that Lin stopped filming when the man woke up because he didn't want to be seen filming the incident.

Similar rat-related footage has been captured in the past with equally cringe-worthy results. In November, a video posted to YouTube got attention on social media, according to Pix11, because the rat in it inadvertently took a selfie with a subway rider's cellphone.

Rats on a train ... and on this man's lap. PROVIDED

Lin said that his footage makes him think twice about sleeping on the subway, according to NBC4.

"Yeah, that certainly makes me hesitant about sleeping in the subway again," he was quoted by NBC4. To see the video, visit Metro.us. JASON NUCKOLLS

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BRIEF

Suspect sought for punching, robbing woman on Brooklyn subway platform

The NYPD is looking for a man they say punched a woman at a Brooklyn subway station earlier this month while he struggled to rob her.

On March 4 at about 8:10 a.m. the suspect approached the 22-year-old victim from behind on the southbound platform inside the Livonia Avenue L train subway station, according to police.

The man then threatened the victim's life if she did not give him her cellphone, cops said.

A struggle between the two then began in which the man punched the young woman in her head while taking her Samsung phone, and then fled in an unknown direction.

The victim did not go to the hospital.

Police describe the suspect

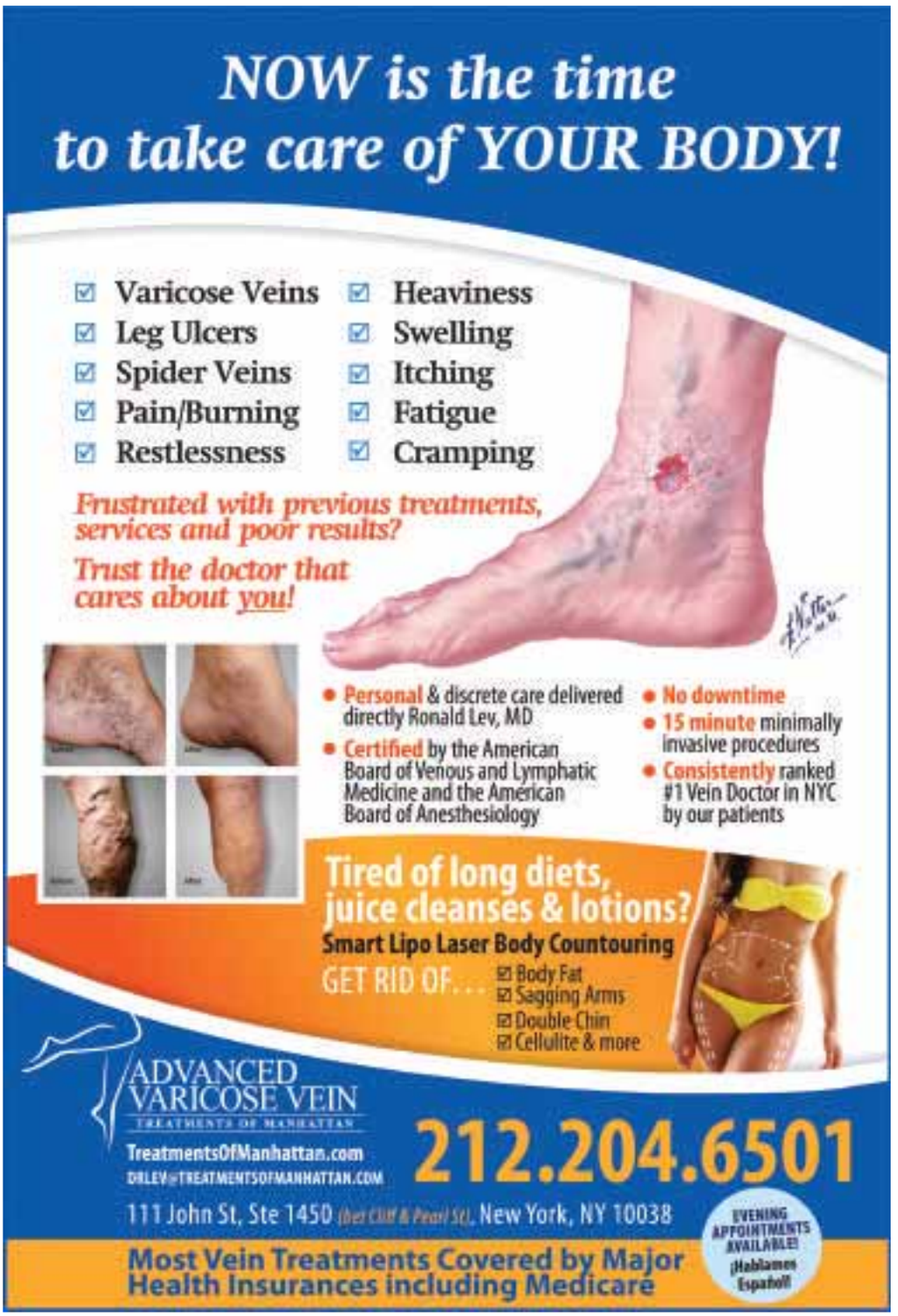
The suspect **PROVIDED**

— who can be seen in surveillance photos from the subway station — as a black man, about 30 years old and last seen wearing a New York Giants jacket.

Anyone with information in regard to this incident is asked to call the NYPD's Crime Stoppers Hotline at 1-800-577-TIPS (8477) or for Spanish, 1-888-57-PISTA (74782).

The public can also submit their tips by logging onto the Crime stoppers website or by texting their tips to 274637 (CRIMES) then enter TIP577.

ANGY ALTAMIRANO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New York housing **FLICKR**

More condos, fewer rentals with expired tax break: city official

Developers said Mayor de Blasio's recent zoning overhaul may have little impact.

JASON NUCKOLLS
@MetroNewYork
letters@metro.us

The recent lapse of a statewide tax break for developers offering affordable units in new buildings will lead to more luxury condos instead of rental units, the City Planning Commission said Tuesday.

The 421a tax break, which expired earlier this year, lapsed because the real estate industry and unions did not agree on a deal regarding wages, the New York Daily News reported.

"We really need more rental housing in the city," Carl Weisbrod, head of the commission, told the Daily News. "We are likely to see more condominium development than rental development, and that's not desirable."

Developers stated that Mayor Bill de Blasio's recent zoning overhaul meant to provide affordable housing in rezoned areas, approved by the City Council last week, may have little impact without the 421a tax break, the Daily News added.

"New York is a city of renters, and one that continues to grow," John Banks, president of the Real Estate Board of New York, said in a Real Deal article when the tax break expired. "Without a program like 421a, one can't build multifamily rental housing with a significant below-market, or affordable, component on a scale necessary to address the city's needs."

The 421a extension was approved by the state legislature in June 2015, but it came with a provision requiring an agreement over developers' use of union contractors, according to the Real Deal. This issue was the sticking point that led to the tax break's expiration.

"We can't risk losing out due to the fact that Albany is not acting," Councilman David Greenfield, chair of the land use committee, was quoted by the Daily News. "For reasons beyond my pay grade, the good folks in Albany haven't been able to come up with a solution."

> *"We can't risk losing out due to the fact that Albany is not acting."*
>
> Greenfield

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Inside Look: The man behind some of Manhattan's coveted addresses

1 Sutton Place South is one of architect Rosario Candela's notable buildings that is still highly sought-after.

CRISTABELLE TUMOLA
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Today, luxury buildings like 432 Park Avenue are changing the New York City skyline. But nearly a century ago, luxury had another look, and one of the most famous architects to create it was an Italian immigrant named Rosario Candela.

Candela's buildings, many located on Fifth and Park avenues, still exist and are highly coveted addresses, according to CityRealty.

"These buildings reek of good taste, better proportions, lavish expanses of limestone on the exterior and considerable square footage inside the apartments. Informal, open kitchens were not his thing. Most of his widely coveted buildings appear understated from the outside. Apartment layouts generally are grand and formal…"

A 1988 New York Times article on the architect, who lived from 1890 to 1953, said his "elevated concepts of layout, amenities, spaciousness and luxury set a new standard for the way rich people should live in multiple dwellings."

Written during a different time in New York, the article added that "no one today even thinks of building in the grand Candela manner. The economic moment when that was possible has long since has passed, but that makes the Candela apartments that survive among the most sought after in the city."

1 Sutton Place South ANTON BROOKES

Though luxury construction may be booming since the '80s, his buildings are still surviving the test of time.

According to the Real Deal, the former Stanhope Hotel at 995 Fifth Ave., which Candela designed in 1926, was renovated several years ago, and the same 2008 article cites a rehab of a 771 Madison Ave. and 66th Street building that he designed.

City Reality put together a list of Candela's top 10 New York City-designed buildings, which included 1 Sutton Place South, completed in 1926.

Located between 56th and 57th streets, the 13-story co-op is known for its triple-arched driveway entrance that opens to a lobby, which then gives way to a private garden overlooking the East River.

The neo-Georgian structure also features a seven-room 5,000-square-foot penthouse, with 6,000 square feet of terraces that wrap entirely around it, according to Douglas Elliman.

The penthouse also "features an elaborate palazzo, two 40-foot-high drawing rooms on opposite ends of the apartment, 18th-century gold and ivory door frames and white marble floors."

The penthouse may not be for sale, but for $11,495,000, a 12-room apartment also with river views is on the market. That unit has a wood burning fireplace, oak herringbone floors, library and dressing room adjacent to the master bedroom.

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Newark settles police tactics probe

Protesters march against law enforcement stop-and-frisk policy. GETTY IMAGES

The city of Newark, New Jersey, and the U.S. Department of Justice have reached a deal to resolve allegations that the city's police department routinely violated civil rights, particularly those of minorities.

In 2014, after a three-year review, federal investigators found police engaged in a pattern of unconstitutional practices in Newark, the largest city in New Jersey and just 8 miles from New York City, and recommended an independent monitor oversee changes.

At the time, the city agreed to accept the findings of the Justice Department probe and proposed reforms.

"We cannot arrest our way out of the problems we have in Newark," Mayor Ras Baraka said in 2014 of his city, a former manufacturing center that has struggled to overcome its image of urban blight and high crime.

The probe found that 85 percent of pedestrian stops involved blacks, who are roughly 54 percent of Newark's population. It also said officers stole citizens' property, failed to offer a legal justification for three-quarters of pedestrian stops and used excessive force far too often.

The Newark agreement comes amid national tensions over police encounters with minorities, which have sparked frequent protests often led by the Black Lives Matter movement.

The Justice Department has reached similar settlements with other cities in recent years, including Ferguson, Missouri, which initially rejected a deal to reform its police practices before capitulating in the face of a federal lawsuit. The department is also probing the Chicago Police Department in the wake of several high-profile police shootings of minorities.

Wednesday's settlement also comes two years after a federal judge ruled New York's stop-and-frisk policing amounted to illegal racial profiling and ordered a federal monitor to oversee changes.

Newark's city council voted earlier this month to create a permanent civilian complaint board to oversee the police department. REUTERS

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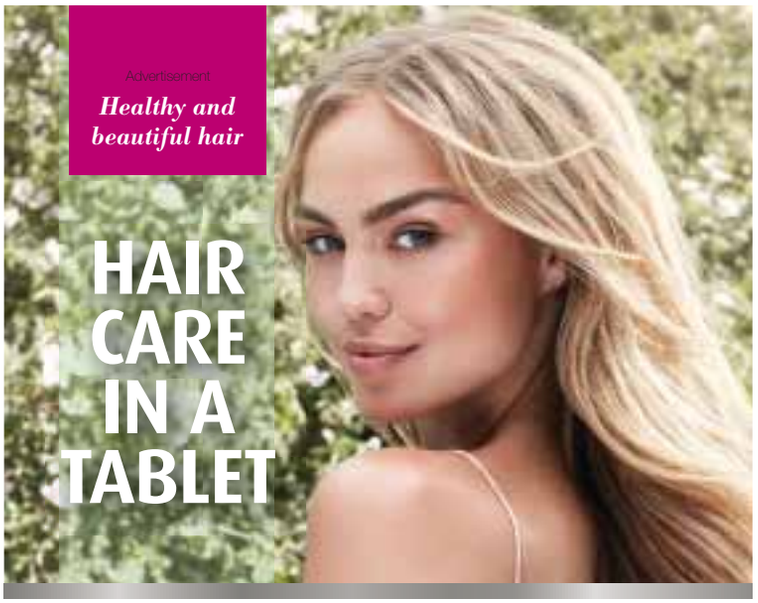

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Apple, Google routinely asked to help government access devices: ACLU

Other cases involving government requests for Apple's help are still pending. GETTY IMAGES

The American Civil Liberties Union on Wednesday said it had identified 63 cases across the U.S. in which the federal government asked for a court order compelling Apple Inc. or Google to help access devices seized during investigations.

The cases predominantly arise from investigations into drug crimes, the ACLU said, adding that data indicate such government requests have become "quite ordinary."

Representatives for the Justice Department and Apple declined to comment.

A spokesman for Google declined to say how frequently it has cooperated with requests or orders or how often it has contested them.

The Justice Department previously disclosed that Apple has received 70 court orders requiring it to provide assistance since 2008, which it obeyed without objection.

However, last October Apple contested a Justice Department demand for assistance in a Brooklyn drug case. Since then, Apple has objected to several other government requests for help accessing devices across the country, the company said in a court filing last month.

A U.S. judge in Brooklyn agreed with Apple and ruled that Congress has not authorized the government to ask for the help it demanded of the company. The Justice Department has appealed that ruling.

The ACLU report comes after the Justice Department withdrew a request for Apple's assistance in California, saying Monday it had unlocked an iPhone used by one of the shooters involved in a rampage in San Bernardino in December without Apple's help.

A variety of Apple and Google products have been targeted by court orders, according to the ACLU report. In one, an Apple iPhone 5 was seized by a man arrested in 2013 for importing methamphetamine from Mexico.

A California court ordered Apple to help the Justice Department bypass the passcode and copy data onto an external hard drive. The order does not specify which operating system was running on the phone. REUTERS

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US to deploy armored brigade combat teams to Europe in 2017

This will bring the total U.S. Army presence on the continent to three fully manned brigades.

American troops arrive in Swidwin, Poland, on April 23, 2014, in response to Russia's actions in Ukraine. Now, even more troops are planned to deploy to Eastern Europe due to Russia's recent military actions. GETTY IMAGES

The U.S. military said on Wednesday that it would deploy rotations of U.S.-based armored brigade combat teams to Europe, part of a wider effort to counter what the United States sees as Russian aggression on the continent.

The teams will be on nine-month rotations starting in February 2017, and will conduct military exercises across Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary, according to a statement from U.S. European Command.

Each unit rotating in will bring equipment that is more modern and will ultimately replace the current training equipment in Europe. A typical U.S. Army armored brigade has about 4,500 soldiers.

The decision means U.S. allies will "see a more frequent presence of an armored brigade with more modernized equipment in their countries," said Gen. Philip Breedlove, commander of U.S. European Command.

The United States has budgeted to sharply boost military training and exercises aimed at reassuring European countries concerned about Russia, which seized Ukraine's Crimean peninsula in 2014 and has worried NATO allies with its strategic bomber flights.

Current equipment used in Europe will be upgraded and stored in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany, and will allow for "additional combat power, if and when needed," the military said. REUTERS

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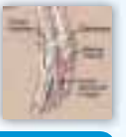

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RACE FOR THE WHITE HOUSE

Trump, Kasich ditch GOP loyalty pledge

Trump said the Republican Party had not treated him fairly.

Republican presidential front-runner Donald Trump and his two rivals, Ted Cruz and John Kasich, backed away from their pledges to support the eventual nominee, potentially setting the stage for a deeply divided party and a chaotic convention in July.

Trump said that if he becomes the party's nominee for the Nov. 8 general election, he did not care if Cruz supported him.

"I don't really care whether or not Cruz endorses me," Trump said in an interview on Fox News. "The only ones supporting me that I care about are the people."

Candidates had agreed to support the party's nominee earlier in the campaign, but Trump and Ohio Gov. Kasich both abandoned the pledge on Tuesday night during town halls televised by CNN.

"If the nominee is somebody that I think is really hurting the country … I can't stand behind them," Kasich said.

Cruz, a senator from Texas, did not explicitly abandon the pledge but said Trump wasn't going to be the nominee. "We're going to beat him," he said.

The crumbling of the pledge prompted questions about whether the party can unite behind a general election candidate and speculation that the Republican convention in Cleveland could erupt in chaos.

Donald Trump GETTY IMAGES

The Republican National Committee on Wednesday did not comment on the candidates' new stances.

"The pledge is simple, each candidate agreed to run as a Republican and support the nominee. We are confident that Republicans will unite to defeat [Democratic front-runner] Hillary Clinton," committee spokeswoman Lindsay Walters said in an email. REUTERS

Poll: Most support torture against terror suspects

Nearly two-thirds of Americans believe torture can be justified to extract information from suspected terrorists, according to an online Reuters/Ipsos poll, a level of support similar to that seen in countries like Nigeria where militant attacks are common.

The poll reflects an American public on edge after the massacre of 14 people in San Bernardino, California, in December and large-scale attacks in Europe in recent months, including a bombing claimed by the militant group Islamic State last week that killed at least 32 people in Belgium.

Donald Trump, the front-runner for the 2016 Republican presidential nomination, has forcefully injected the issue of whether terrorism suspects should be tortured into the election campaign.

Detainees from the U.S. war in Afghanistan. GETTY IMAGES

Trump has said he would seek to roll back President Barack Obama's ban on waterboarding — a technique that simulates drowning that human rights groups contend is illegal under the Geneva Conventions. Trump has also vowed to "bring back a hell of a lot worse" if elected.

Trump's stance has drawn broad criticism from human rights organizations, world bodies and political rivals. But the poll findings suggest that many Americans are aligned with Trump on the issue, although the survey did not ask respondents to define what they consider torture.

The March 22-28 online poll asked respondents if torture can be justified "against suspected terrorists to obtain information about terrorism." About 25 percent said it is "often" justified while another 38 percent it is "sometimes" justified. Only 15 percent said torture should never be used. REUTERS

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Firms target investment in Israeli cannabis R&D

Already a pioneer in high-tech and cutting-edge agriculture, Israel is starting to attract American companies looking to bring medical marijuana know-how to a booming market back home.

Since 2014, U.S. firms have invested about $50 million in licensing Israeli medical marijuana patents, cannabis agro-tech startups and firms developing delivery devices such as inhalers, said Saul Kaye, CEO of iCAN, a private cannabis research hub.

"I expect it to grow to $100 million in the coming year," Kaye said at iCAN's CannaTech conference in Tel Aviv this month, one of the largest gatherings of medical marijuana experts.

Scientists say strict rules, some set by the Drug Enforcement Administration, limit cannabis studies in the United States, where the legal marijuana market is valued at $5.7 billion and expected to grow to $23 billion by 2020.

Cannabis GETTY IMAGES

"In the United States, it's easier to study heroin than marijuana," said U.S. psychiatrist Suzanne Sisley, who has researched the effects of cannabis as a treatment for American military veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder.

"With marijuana you have to go through added layers of government red tape. It highlights the way marijuana research is being shackled by politics," said Sisley, director of medicinal plant research at Heliospectra.

While scientific exploration may be restricted, 23 U.S. states now permit medical cannabis, and recreational use is allowed in four states and Washington, D.C. This is despite the fact that at the federal level, marijuana is still classified as a dangerous narcotic with no medicinal value.

In Israel, marijuana is an illegal drug and only 23,000 people have Health Ministry permits to purchase medical cannabis from nine licensed suppliers, creating a market of $15 million to $20 million at most.

But Israeli authorities are liberal when it comes to research. Growers work with scientific institutions in clinical trials and development of strains that treat a variety of illnesses and disorders.

REUTERS

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Emilia Clarke slams 'Thrones' sexism claims

It's hard out there for the Mother of Dragons, and the last thing Emilia Clarke needs while she makes her slow march toward the Iron Throne is all these naysayers complaining about how "Game of Thrones" is terrible for women. She would argue, rather, that it's just great for women. Just great! "There's so much controversy, yet that's what's beautiful about 'Game of Thrones' — it's depiction of women in so many different stages of development," Clarke tells Entertainment Weekly, waving off claims that the show has a sexism problem. "There are women depicted as sexual tools, women who have zero rights, women who are queens but only to a man, and then there are women who are literally unstoppable and as powerful as you can possibly imagine. So it pains me to hear people taking 'Thrones' out of context with an anti-feminist spin — because you can't do that about this show. It shows the range that happens to women, and ultimately shows women are not only equal, but have a lot of strength." Got that?

Elton John sued by cop for getting all grope-y

Well, this is awkward. A former member of Elton John's personal security detail, who happened to be doing the work while off-duty from his regular gig as an LAPD officer is suing the "Tiny Dancer" singer for sexual harassment and battery. The suit, filed in Los Angeles on Monday, alleges that from 2002 to 2014, John inappropriately touched Jeffrey Wenninger, also a Medal of Valor recipient, several times and made sexually suggestive comments. The suit also claims the incidents escalated "in frequency and intensity after 2010," though I'm not really sure what happened that year to make John so much bolder. John's attorney, naturally, is having none of it. "This baseless lawsuit is brought by a disgruntled former security officer seeking to extract an undeserved payment," Orin Snyder tells the Los Angeles Times. "These claims are patently untrue and contradicted by numerous previous statements made by this plaintiff. We will not give in to his latest abuse of the legal system."

James Corden steals J. Lo's phone, texts Leo

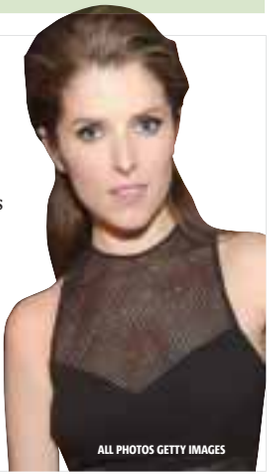
What would you do if you got your hands on the phone of a major celebrity? Obviously, use it to text other major celebrities. Well, that's just what James Corden did during his "Carpool Karaoke" special when Jennifer Lopez stupidly let her phone fall into his grubby paws. Despite Lopez's protests, Corden typed out a message to Leonardo DiCaprio — "Hey baby, I'm kind of feeling like I need to cut loose. Any suggestions? Let me know, J. Lo (you know, from The Block)" — and hit send. And before long, DiCaprio responded with, "You mean tonight, boo boo? Club wise?" Sadly, they didn't go on long enough so that the rest of the world could benefit from DiCaprio's club-hopping recommendations. I wonder if he has a Yelp account.

the word

NED EHRBAR
letters@metro.us

Twitter connects former 'Twilight' co-stars in need

Ah, social media. Is there anything it can't do? From making sure people nowhere near Ankara weren't hurt in a terrorist bombing to getting Instagram stars all lathered up over post notifications, social media entities just want you to know that they care. And they also care about bringing former colleagues together, like "Twilight" co-stars Anna Kendrick and Kellan Lutz. Kendrick took to Twitter to seek some assistance in the manly arts, tweeting, "Hi, I'm Anna, I'm alone tonight and I'm looking for a strapping muscular man to come over because butternut squash is hard to dice," followed by a series of kissy faces. Seems reasonable enough. And lo, who should respond? None other than sparkly second-run vampire himself, Lutz, who tweeted back, "Hi Anna, what kind of knife do you have?" Hey now, buddy, that's getting kind of personal.



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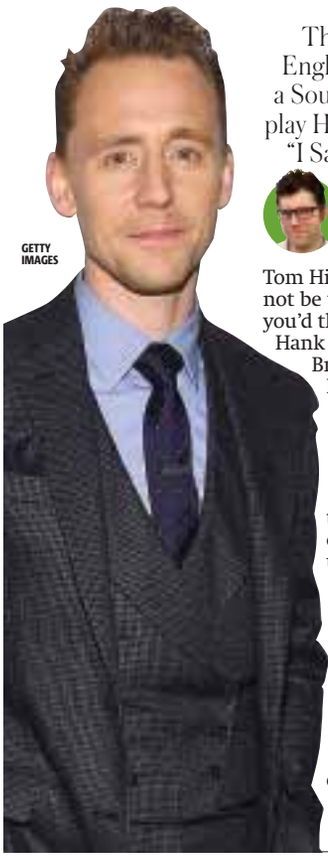
10 YEARS

Tom Hiddleston is trying to be a little bit country


GETTY IMAGES

The acclaimed English actor does a Southern twang to play Hank Williams in "I Saw the Light."

MATT PRIGGE
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Tom Hiddleston might not be the first person you'd think of to play Hank Williams. He's British, he's blond, he's not a singer. But the actor, 35, committed to playing the country music icon in the biopic "I Saw the Light," which covers his career up until his sudden death at 29. At one point during our conversation, Hiddleston — who's juggled his duties as Marvel's villainous Loki with smaller, oft-challenging films like "The Deep Blue Sea," "Only Lovers Left Alive" and the forthcoming "High-Rise" — lets his proper English accent slip effortlessly into a Southern twang, just because he can, now.

In "I Saw the Light," Tom Hiddleston plays Hank Williams opposite Elizabeth Olsen, as his wife, Audrey. SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

You have a history with theater work, but was it scary actually performing music live?
Pure white terror. [Laughs]

How did you overcome it?
You have to use it as an engine to motivate you. I moved in with a musician named Rodney Crowell, who's based in Nashville — a huge lifetime fan of Hank Williams. He saw Hank on his dad's shoulders at the age of 2, and he remembers it. He invited me to live with him, to practice. I came down and he was playing a set at this folk festival in Michigan. He said, [adopts a spot-on Southern accent] "Tom, I feel like this is a good chance to experience what it's like to play in front of an audience." Bear in mind this was 24 hours outside London. [Laughs] He and I played in front of however many thousands of people. It was absolutely terrifying — but thrilling. In that moment I understood why the Mick Jaggers of this world, the Bob Dylans, the Bruce Springsteens — why they do this for decade after decade. It's an incredible adrenaline rush.

Have you performed since the movie wrapped?
We had a screening in Nashville in October. There was a party afterwards. I got onstage with the band and sang a few Hank songs. It was really fun. I would do these bits between the songs, and I realized I couldn't do them in an English accent. [Laughs] I had to stay in character. I'm not about to drop my solo album, if that's what you're asking. I don't think anybody needs that. [Laughs]

In praise of singing

You've played musicians before, such as in Jim Jarmusch's "Only Lovers Left Alive." What have you learned about them you didn't know going in?
I have such huge admiration for musicians. Music is a huge inspiration for me. It's such a raw and immediate path to the heart. Singing is the most naked means of expression. Actors can hide behind characters, writers behind words. Singing is completely open. You think of Nina Simone, Amy Winehouse, Johnny Cash — people who wear their hearts on their sleeves, and singing is the purest way of doing that.

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No sophomore slump for Lucius. GETTY IMAGES

Translating emotion into music

Lucius speaks on their sophomore release, "Good Grief."

CHRIS LEO PALERMINO
@indiecalp
letters@metro.us

Lucius' confusing, exciting journey since the group's 2013 debut record is best summed up in two words: "Good Grief." The five-piece indie pop outfit has relentlessly toured, become a colorful fixture on the summer festival circuit, moved cross-country from Brooklyn to Los Angeles and performed on network TV shows like "Late Night with Stephen Colbert" and "Ellen."

The frenetic turn of events come out in full force on the group's dynamic sophomore album "Good Grief." Front women Jess Wolfe and Holly Laessig and their band explore '80s synths, funk and even straight pop cuts without straying too far from their Americana roots.

Just before Lucius left for another nationwide tour, we spoke with Wolfe on performing on network TV and how the record came together.

What was it like performing on "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert" and "Ellen"?

I mean, it's very quick. Before you know it, it's over. Because of how short of a time you get to make an impact, you do whatever you can in the time that you have to have as much energy and be as alive and out there as possible.

What were you hoping to accomplish on the new record?

Just honesty … By the time we were able to sit down in a room and start thinking about songs or going through our voice memos and our lyrics and our journals and stuff, we were ready to purge. Just so much — so much feeling, so much emotion, so many memories, and the fact that we weren't able to release that at any other time made it more intense.

I was reading that you and your producer were looking to lots of different references on the record — German avant garde and more pop music like Taylor Swift. How were you able to marry all of these influences while recording?

[For] each song, we would each find one song that would directly inspire it. From Judee Sill to Beyonce, the reason why it was so diverse and eclectic is because each of us had a different sort of idea of the landscape of the song. When you think about recording a song, maybe the guitarist is thinking about the guitars and the vocalist is thinking about the vocals and the drummer's thinking about certain production elements. It helped us to think outside of our usual sort of approach.

If you go:

March 31 at 7 p.m.
Music Hall of Williamsburg
66 N. Sixth St., Brooklyn
musichallofwilliamsburg.com

April 1 at 7 p.m.
Webster Hall
125 E. 11th St., New York
websterhall.com

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Beautiful music

Petra Haden and Jesse Harris team up on a new album.

SHAUN BRADY
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Yes, this was a good idea. STEVE PERILLOUX

Over the past couple of years, Petra Haden has re-created movie soundtracks with her dazzling vocals. On her 2013 album "Petra Goes to the Movies," and more recently on jazz guitarist Bill Frisell's similarly-themed "When You Wish Upon a Star," Haden's versatile voice could be heard singing melodies meant for a shrieking violin or an eerie theremin.

When it came time for her next project, Haden wanted to get back to actual words. "I missed singing songs that had a story," the eclectic artist says.

While playing violin with jazz guitarist Anthony Wilson in Los Angeles, she found her ideal partner: singer/songwriter/guitarist Jesse Harris, best known for writing Norah Jones' 2002 hit "Don't Know Why."

"When I listen to his songs, I smile," says Haden. "I've always wanted to have that ability to write beautiful songs like Jesse or Joni Mitchell. How do these geniuses do it?"

She got a firsthand look when the two collaborated on the new album "Seemed Like a Good Idea — Petra Haden Sings Jesse Harris." Harris wrote seven new songs for the album along with lyrics to a John Zorn composition, and he and Haden wrote three songs together. In their earliest stages, those tunes seemed to echo Haden's experiences with wordless vocals.

"I started by singing gibberish into my phone," she explains with a chuckle. "Then he magically came up with great words to match my melodies."

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Awesome blossoms

No need to wait for April's showers to do their work — there are plenty of blooms coming up to welcome spring. Here are the best places to see impressive flower displays around the city.

EVA KIS

things to do

Brooklyn Botanic Garden **LIZ LIGON**

Brooklyn Botanic Garden

April 1 is the official kickoff to cherry blossom season, but some of the sweet-smelling trees in the traditional Japanese Hill-and-Pond Garden are already in bloom. Not to worry — the garden is host to an extraordinary variety of cherry trees, from tiny bonsai to the white-flowered Yoshino most prized in Japan, all blooming at various times (and only for a week each) through mid-May. Don't miss the Sakura Matsuri festival on April 30 and May 1, celebrating Japanese heritage and current cultural trends.

Heather Garden

If you've been meaning to get up to the Cloisters, make time for an amble through Fort Tryon Park's Heather Garden, the city's largest free, unrestricted garden. Originally designed for John D. Rockefeller and opened to the public in 1935, the park boasts more than 500 varieties of plants, trees and shrubs, but the jewel is its collection of fuchsia-bright heathers — the largest in the Northeast. Enjoy the blooms until April 9, when the Shearing of the Heathers happens as part of a community parade (bring your instruments!) through the gardens.

Conservatory Garden

The only formal garden in Central Park is tucked into six acres at its northern end. But the Conservatory Garden is actually three unique areas styled after three European countries. Flower seekers should head to the French garden, where 45,000 tulips and daffodils upstage the Three Dancing Maidens fountain, or bring a picnic to the Italian garden's rectangular lawn, surrounded by gorgeously fragrant crabapple trees, all expected to flower between April 20 and May 3. Or forget the city altogether under the shower of violet blooms that take over the wisteria pergola from May 8-15.

New York Botanic Garden

Orchids were the 19th century's Pokemon in Europe, where a single specimen shipped to England in 1818 kicked off a craze dubbed Orchidelirium. The bloom inspired this year's 14th annual show, which showcases the orchid's controversial history — the flowers had to be harvested from jungles, where dangerous animals and disease were common. Back in the safety of the Bronx, they'll continue to bloom — most memorably as a giant waterfall made entirely of various orchids — through April 17. In June, roses will step into the spotlight at the Peggy Rockefeller Rose Garden, where over 650 varieties will bloom until October.

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Listings

TV

An Evening with "Orphan Black"

March 31, 7:30 p.m.
Kaufman Concert Hall
1395 Lexington Ave.
$42-$48, 92y.org
Join the bafflingly talented Tatiana Maslany, who leads the ensemble cast of clones on "Orphan Black," and co-star Jordan Gavaris, along with co-creator Graeme Manson, for a talk about the series so far — and an extended sneak peek at clips from Season 4, premiering April 14 on BBC America.

WEDDINGS

New York Weddings Event

March 31, 5-8 p.m.
Capitale, 130 Bowery
$40-$60, Weddings.nymag.com
Whether you're getting married or just love to ogle the white gowns filling the pages of New York magazine's wedding edition, immerse yourself in all of the fanfare that comes with the big day at the annual New York Weddings Event. Vendors include top names in the business like Kleinfeld Bridal (of "Say Yes to the Dress") to help with tasks from building a wedding website to planning your honeymoon.

FOOD

Dining and Social Positioning

March 31, 6:30 p.m.
Mount Vernon Hotel
421 E. 61st St.
$40, MVMH.org
What does the food we eat say about our place in society? Yale history professor Paul Freeman in partnership with the Culinary Historians of New York will not only discuss how class dictated what we used to eat when dining out, but offer tastes of the dishes that defined upscale restaurants.

Beefsteak Dinner

April 1, 7:30-11:30 p.m.
Riverpark, 450 E. 29th St.
$150, Riverpark.com
Loosen your ties — a beefsteak dinner is all about digging in without utensils. Tom Colicchio's Riverpark is providing aprons (though dress to impress underneath) for its three-course meat lover's feast of peel&eat prawns, leg of lamb and, of course, prime rib, among many other dishes. And since this is meant to be a party as much as a dinner, there will be live music and free-flowing bourbon and beer.

GALA

Winter Thaw

April 1, 8-11 p.m.
Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave.
$75-$140, MCNY.org
Party like the cultured adult you are at the sixth annual Winter Thaw, the Young Members Circle (ages 21-39) gala to raise money for the museum — which you'll have free rein of during this party. You'll also enjoy cocktails featuring Brooklyn Gin, music by DJ GWiz and bites from Dos Toros, Bareburger and more.

DRINKS

NYC Craft Distillers Festival

April 2, 1-4 p.m. & 7-10 p.m.
The Bowery Hotel, 335 Bowery
$95+, NYCcraftdistillersfest.com
Find out what's brewing in the city at the NYC Craft Distillers Festival, with samples of 60 craft spirits from flavored gins and new whiskeys to Manhattan Moonshine and spiced honey liqueur. While you imbibe, you'll also enjoy live jazz music, and Gatsby-era attire is highly encouraged. VIP entry gives you an extra hour ahead of the crowds.

FILM

Chantal Akerman: Images Between the Images

April 1-May 1
BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn
BAM.org
Belgian filmmaker Chantal Akerman took her life last October, but her films would be powerfully sad were she still here. One of the most rigorous of minimalists, she made austere films about isolation. BAM's monthlong survey of her work will showcase the likes of "Je Tu Il Elle" (pictured), "News from Home," "Toute une Nuit" and her swan song "No Home Movie" — all melancholic yet playful works where you both forget about time and note every passing moment.

Chantal Akerman in her 1974 film "Je Tu Il Elle." JANUS FILMS

SOCIAL

Pillow Fight NYC

April 2, 3 p.m.
Washington Square Park
Free, Pillowfightday.com
In honor of International Pillow Fight Day (seriously), you can bring spare bedding to Washington Square Park on Saturday and join a thousands-strong friendly free-for-all hosted by the Urban Playground Movement.

T. MICHELLE MURPHY

"Fly, You Fools!"

Premieres April 1, 9:30 p.m.
Continues on Fridays through April 29, 8 p.m.
The Peoples Improv Theater
123 E. 24th St.
$20

LLOYD MULVEY

Not since Warner Bros. stretched JRR Tolkien's shortest novel into three movies has so much been done with so little. The manic comedy troupe Recent Cutbacks is back after the massive success of their "Jurassic Park" send-up "Hold On To Your Butts," returning with what sounds like an impossible project: a scene-for-scene recreation of the first "Lord of the Rings" film, in the purely metaphorically titled (no, seriously, sit down Frodo, there's an elf speaking) "Fly, You Fools!"

It doesn't get lower-fi than a small circle of props and a paper towel roll, and you've never seen black hoodies work harder as costumes, but there's definitely magic in this production. With just three actors and one scene-stealing foley artist, they prance, whine, row but definitely not fly their way toward Mordor in an hour-long adventure that manages to balance wink-wink parody with enough emotional gravitas to show that this — like any fan project — is a labor of love. Who needs CGI when you've got that?

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5 Best honeymoon destinations for 2016

It's time to plan the fun part of the wedding.

Fodor's Travel

"Honeymoons last not nowadays above a fortnight," Samuel Richardson observed in his 18th-century novel, "Clarissa." He had a point: While love certainly may last beyond two weeks, precious vacation time may not, which makes choosing the right honeymoon destination even more crucial. Start a marriage off on the right foot by first figuring out what type of travel fits your newlywed fantasy. Whether you crave the beach, some outdoor adventure, a little culture or an extended party, there's somewhere in the world for both of you to make your first memories together. Here are our top picks for 2016, each complete with timely appeal. KATHLEEN SQUIRES

FOR NATURE LOVERS

Yellowstone

This summer, the National Park Service commemorates its centennial, which means parks across America will be celebrating with special events. Mark the occasion by visiting Yellowstone, America's first park and the home of Old Faithful, hundreds of grizzlies and the country's most spectacular wilderness. Visitors can get close with nature in every way imaginable, via cycling, river rafting, hiking, wildlife safaris, fishing, boating, bird watching, horseback riding and swimming.

Where to Stay: Spring Creek Ranch in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, is celebrating the occasion with multiday wolf and bear safaris through Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks. The ranch also includes rooms with sweeping mountain views and fireplaces, plus an award-winning restaurant and spa.

FOR OENOPHILES

Umbria

The birthplace of St. Valentine provides couples with a host of reasons to bypass more touristy neighbors in favor of Italy's literal heart. Scenic vineyards producing terrific wines is reason No. 1. Known for the Sagrantino grape, the area around Montefalco had a particularly strong harvest in 2015. Wineries especially worth a visit include the historic Cantina Scacciadiavoli, the region's oldest, which was founded by a Roman prince; the sleek, modern Tenuta Castelbuono, designed by the sculptor Arnaldo Pomodoro, where the winery is a work of art in itself; the family-run, organic Antonelli, where couples can also enjoy cooking classes; the scenic Arnaldo Caprai, where visitors can take in breathtaking panoramas of the region; and Colpetrone, which connoisseurs may recognize because of its wide distribution in the United States. Dinner in a local restaurant, such as Alchimista, will include the wine in the dishes, such as Sagrantino-braised beef. Cap it all off at tiny, out-of-the way jazz and wine bar Microclima (Piazza San Domenico 27) in Foligno, which pours the best local labels, of course.

Where to Stay: The Palazzo Bontadosi in the old city of Montefalco was once home to a 15th-century cardinal. Today it houses a spa with Turkish bath, aqua treatments and grapeseed facial; a terrific restaurant, Locanda del Teatro; and a dome-ceilinged room (No. 1) bedecked in historic frescoes.

FOR CRUISERS

Iceland

In 2016 Windstar Cruises, the world's smallest luxury cruise line, launches a brand-new itinerary: Around Iceland takes guests on a seven-day sail from Reykjavik, stopping at five of the country's outlying islands. Highlights include a soak in the famous Blue Lagoon; the renowned Hengifoss and Godafoss waterfalls; and Vigur Island, populated with puffins and black guillemots. The all-suite Star Legend yacht accommodates only 200 people, perfect for honeymooners who enjoy an intimate sail with personalized service.

Where to Stay: All suites have been recently refurbished; but it's your honeymoon, so why not spring for one of the four classic suites, with private verandas?

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FOR URBANITES

Boston

This is a boom year when it comes to city charms for Boston. A Picasso exhibition is currently visiting the Museum of Fine Arts Boston, and the museum started the year by acquiring Frida Kahlo's "Dos Mujeres." Beantown's first edition of the Public Art Walk has plans to expand, incorporating new neighborhoods into an itinerary that already includes Back Bay, Beacon Hill, the Financial District and the North End; the Museum of Science just unveiled a 4-D theater and a new three-story gallery overlooking the Charles River; and gourmands will thrill to three new restaurant openings from award-winning local chef Ken Oringer, including Uni, which recently transformed from acclaimed sushi bar to high-end Asian-inspired global restaurant, with one-of-a-kind dishes such as mozzarella en carozza with unagi, and Chiang Mai duck carnitas.

Where to Stay: Both The Eliot Hotel and The Colonnade are offering a Museum of Fine Arts Boston package, which includes accommodations, two passes to the museum — where you can catch those Picassos — and breakfast for two.

FOR BEACH LOVERS

Nevis

You may not have heard of this Caribbean island, but you most certainly have heard of its most famous native, Alexander Hamilton (yes, he of the Founding Fathers, and Broadway's current smash musical). This year, the island became even more accessible, with new direct flights from United Airlines via Newark. Its beaches have a reputation for being among the Caribbean's most secluded and unspoiled, while its interior boasts verdant rainforests and volcanoes. Ample marine life encourages snorkeling between suntanning sessions.

Where to Stay: Newly opened Paradise Beach is the island's only beachfront villa resort, with seven thatch-roof villas, each with their own lap and plunge pool. Here, couples can canoodle over a private dinner on the beach, enjoy guided waterfall hikes and sip Champagne aboard a catamaran during a moonlight sail.

ALL IMAGES ISTOCK

An open-and-shut case

As the carousel at the airport luggage terminal begins to spin, you wait with a hundred other tired passengers for your suitcase. Your phone is dead, you've just gotten off a red-eye and you want to get out as soon as possible. There it is! Just as you've grabbed the handle, another hand reaches out. Turns out, it's the wrong suitcase.

A company called Raden wants to end this issue — and other unexpected technology woes — with their new line of sleek, chic, smart luggage. It's not quite the first of its kind, but Raden most recently raised $3.5 million in seed funding to grow their bluetooth-powered suitcases, with the hopes/expectations of becoming as seamless in the lives of consumers as Fitbit or iPhone.

Each suitcase, ranging $295 for a carry-on to $395 for checked bag, creates its own network with low energy Bluetooth and allows owners to track the location of their bags through an iOS app. Not only will they alert owners when their bags are coming around the luggage carousel, they can provide the weight of suitcase and charge external devices via two built-in USB ports. There's a pop-out battery that powers the whole operation, which, according to the brand, "passed all relevant regulatory certifications and testing standards for travel and battery powered electronics." Now if it only had a mini bar…

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It's key to know how long a leash to trust inconsistent players like Lucas Duda with. GETTY IMAGES

FANTASY BASEBALL EARLY TIPS: DO'S AND DON'TS AS SEASON APPROACHES

OPINION

KYLE BISHOP
@RotoBaller

With Opening Day mercifully arriving next week, most leagues have held their drafts. The only thing left to do, of course, is play the games. Here are a few tips to help you navigate the waters in the early going.

DO

Maintain a healthy watch list

The major platforms all include this feature. It's a godsend all season long, but particularly in the opening weeks of the season. It's a place to keep tabs on any and all available players you might find interesting, but didn't grab in the draft for one reason or another. During April, when players' stat lines can swing violently in either direction, the watch list can help keep you from losing anyone in the shuffle.

DON'T

Panic

The saying goes, "You can't win a championship in April, but you can lose it." Some owners might interpret that as a call to action, desperate to avoid falling behind early. It can be agonizing to wait for a scuffling star to get going while your rivals may be snatching up the players off to a hot start. As often as not, though, the best move is the move you don't make. For every J.D. Martinez, there are a dozen Emilio Bonifacios. A slow start doesn't doom you. Remember: It's a marathon, not a sprint.

DO

Be proactive

Wait, doesn't that contradict the last suggestion? Not at all. There's a difference between being proactive and overreacting. You should always have a general idea of how long of a leash you're willing to give every player on your roster. Paul Goldschmidt stumbling out of the gate is different from, say, Lucas Duda doing the same. This is where your draft prep can continue paying dividends well into the season. While it's tricky to separate signal from noise in such a small sample, a player struggling with something he's previously fallen prey to – injuries, contact issues, heavy platoon splits, etc. – may be a reliable indicator of future performance.

DON'T

Get attached to old values

We're all human, and as a result we all struggle with the concept of sunk costs. The second your draft ends, what anyone paid for any player ceases to be relevant (beyond keeper or dynasty considerations, of course). Hanging on to a player because you invested heavily in March simply results in compounding the error. This goes for emotional investment as well. Faulkner said, "In writing, you must kill your darlings." The same principle applies here. It doesn't matter how much you bought into the hype or potential of a player. If they aren't getting the job done, it's time to re-evaluate their place on your roster.

Enjoy the games, and good luck this season.

Kyle Bishop is a lead MLB columnist at RotoBaller.com. His articles and Fantasy Baseball Rankings are your secret weapon for winning fantasy leagues.

Syracuse send-off

Syracuse held a Final Four pep rally Wednesday, ahead of Saturday's game against North Carolina. Head coach Jim Boeheim told the crowd: "There's no Cinderellas here. This is a team that deserved to be here." GETTY IMAGES

NHL power rankings | by Rich Slate

No. 1

Capitals (54-16-5)

Washington clinched the Presidents' Trophy with a 4-1 win over Columbus. Goaltender Braden Holtby still has a shot to break Martin Brodeur's NHL single season win record.

No. 2

Blues (46-22-9)

The Blues are tied with the Stars for most points in the Western Conference and St. Louis is riding a five-game win streak. St. Louis is 8-2-0 in its last 10 games and may just take the division over the Stars and Blackhawks.

No. 3

Stars (46-22-9)

Dallas has three more regulation plus overtime wins (44) than St. Louis and their goal-differential is markedly better. The Stars are going to finish as the highest-scoring team in the NHL. Can they keep it going in the playoffs?

No. 4

Kings (45-26-5)

Things remain tight in the Pacific Division as the three California teams have all slowed down a bit - conveniently at the same juncture. LA is 5-4-1 in its last 10 games. The Kings are just one point ahead of the Ducks.

No. 5

Ducks (42-23-10)

Anaheim has won its last two games but it is also 5-4-1 in its last 10. Not really have a clear No. 1 goaltender (Frederik Andersen and John Gibson have been good enough) hasn't really hurt Anaheim.

No. 6

Rangers (43-24-9)

New York is still hanging on to second place in the Metro Division but Pittsburgh has made an amazing run to come within a point of them. The Rangers are 5-2-3 in their last 10 games and they are at Carolina on Thursday.

No. 12

Islanders (41-25-9)

The roller-coaster Islanders are currently pointing up after two straight wins. It looks like the Metro Division will provide both wild card teams in the East (Islanders and Flyers) as Detroit slides.

Miller injured

Yankees' interim closer Andrew Miller was hit on the wrist by a line drive during a spring training game Wednesday. The injury is believed to be a bruise but Miller was sent back to Tampa for X-rays and a CT scan, according to ESPN.com. GETTY IMAGES

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NOTICE OF FORMATION of Exquisite Habitation LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the Secy. of State of New York (SSNY) on 03/11/2016. Office location: Queens County. SSNY is designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the LLC c/o 163-37 130th Ave., Apt. 2C, Jamaica, NY 11434. Purpose: any lawful activity.

NOTICE OF FORMATION of C 34 Legacy, LLC. Articles of Organization filed with the Secy. of State of New York (SSNY) on November 16, 2015. Office location: Kings County. SSNY is designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the LLC c/o 277 Malcolm X Blvd., Brooklyn, NY 11233. Purpose: any lawful activity.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a license, Number 1292653, for Beer & Wine has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Beer & Wine at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 49 West 27th Street., New York, NY 10001, for on-premises consumption. Yummy Meep LLC & Nomad MV LLC.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a license, Number 1293200, for Beer & Wine has been applied for by the undersigned to sell Beer & Wine at retail in a Restaurant under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Law at 228 West 72nd Street, New York, NY 10023, for on-premises consumption. MTGebhard LLC.

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LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE OF QUALIFICATION of The Chosen Cholent LLC. Application for Authority filed with the Secy. of State of New York (SSNY) on 02/01/2016. Office location: New York County. LLC formed in New Jersey on 03/08/2015. SSNY designated as agent of LLC upon whom process against it may be served. SSNY shall mail process to the LLC c/o 14 Pennsylvania Plaza, New York, NY 10122, the registered agent upon whom process may be served: 3 Dockery Drive, West Orange, NJ 07052. Arts. of Org. filed with the Secy. of State of New Jersey, New Jersey Dept. of State, P.O. Box 300 Trenton, NJ 08652. Purpose: any lawful activity.

Notice of Application To Relocate a Bank Main Office

Notice is hereby given the Savoy Bank, currently located at 1675 Broadway, New York, NY 10019, has filed an application for FDIC consent to relocate its branch and main office from 1675 Broadway, New York, NY 10019, to 600 5th Ave., New York, NY 10020.

Any person wishing to comment on this application may file his or her comments in writing with the Regional Director of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation at its Regional office, 350 Fifth Avenue, Suite 1200, New York, NY 10118, not later than April 15, 2016. The non-confidential portions of the application are on file in the Regional Office and are available for public inspection during regular business hours. Photocopies of the non-confidential portion of the application file will be made available upon request.

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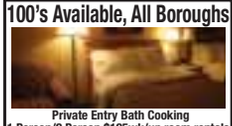

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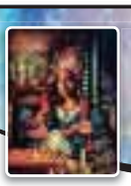

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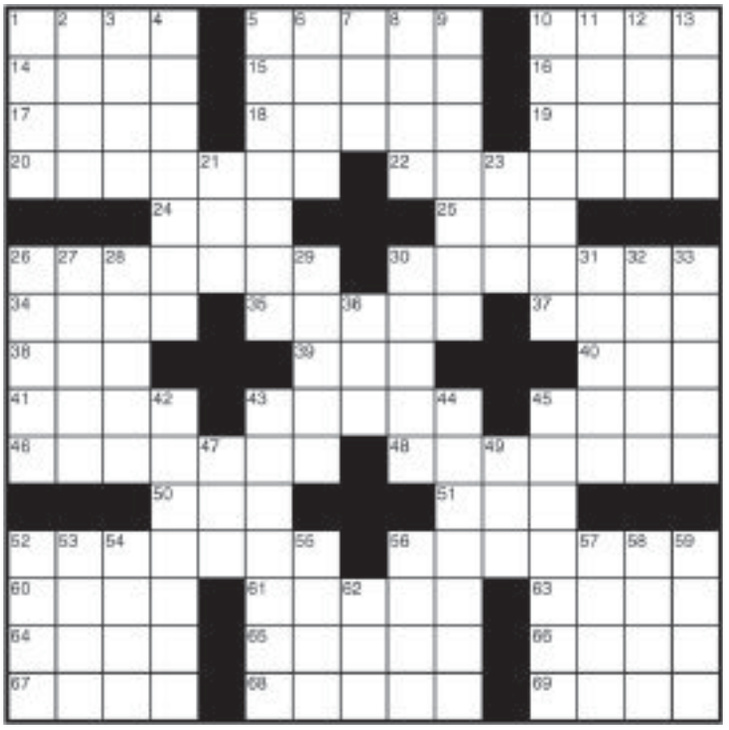

Across

1 Honeycomb unit
5 Reserves
10 Casino supply
14 Not resist
15 Arsenio's buddy
16 Charles Lamb
17 Peaty tract
18 Simpson of fashion
19 Perm follow-ups
20 Naval officers
22 Long journey
24 Semi front
25 Pollen spreader
26 Fiesta fixtures
30 Pupil, hopefully
34 Indigo plant
35 Hung open
37 Garr of "Tootsie"
38 Superman foe — Luthor
39 Collide with
40 It's a snap
41 Grandiose
43 Hammerin' Hank
45 Racing-car dial
46 Furtiveness
48 Interstellar clouds
50 Delay, with "off"
51 PC screen
52 Desert delusions
56 Disco flashers
60 Mighty steed
61 Grid coach Don —
6 Track postings
7 "— to the West Wind"
8 About 2.2 lbs.
9 Germination station
10 Meal ender
11 Dots in "la mer"
12 Make a footnote
13 No sweat!
21 Mobster's piece
23 Formal vote
26 Blanches
27 Klutzy
28 Undeliverable mail
29 Vaughan or Miles
30 Seafood garnish
31 Tibet neighbor
32 Noted soap vixen
33 Nouveau —
36 Golfer's benchmark
42 Up to the task
43 Bears witness
44 Honey sources
45 Taught individually
47 Strain, as an engine
49 Icy remark?
52 Kind of truck
53 Cyrus' realm, today
54 Steakhouse order
55 Jahan was one
56 Malamute's load
57 Chestnut husk
58 The avenging Mrs. Peel
59 Junk email
62 Banjo kin
63 Haunches
64 — Gustav Jung
65 Bet acceptor
66 Funny Bombeck
67 Troublesome joint
68 Loses fur
69 Wee drink

Down

1 — and get it!
2 Black black
3 Many August people
4 Melodious
5 Casual chair

metro.us/games

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easy

	5				2			9
				1	9			7
		8	3	4				
			4				9	3
7		3	9	2	8	4		5
9	6				5			
				9	3	8		
2			7	6				
3			8				1	

hard

9		2	4					6
7			5	3				1
5		3						
	9	5	3				4	7
4	6				1	3	8	
						8		3
3				8	6			5
6					3	2		4

metro.us/horoscopes

Aries Don't push unless you want to be pushed back. You are best off working at your own speed on projects you can do alone. Physical activity will help you blow off steam.

Taurus You'll attract interest in what you are trying to accomplish. Face-to-face conversations will bring good results. A romantic gesture will improve your personal life.

Gemini Focus on financial matters and look for ways to tie up your cash so you aren't tempted to spend it on unnecessary items. A personal situation will be riddled with disillusionment.

Cancer Express your feelings and share your ideas. You may not like change, but what transpires now will have beneficial results. A partnership will offer more than you expect.

Leo Travel plans will lead to professionally valuable information. A good opportunity will result from an important decision. When opportunity knocks, be ready to jump.

Virgo Don't let personal issues hold you back. Stay focused on detail and doing the best job possible. Walk away from anyone playing mind games with you.

Libra You should listen to someone else's plan, but don't feel obliged to follow it, and if control or bullying is applied, walk away. Protect your position and your right to choose.

Scorpio Reconnect with people you have worked or played with in the past. What transpires will lead to an interesting outcome with personal or professional options galore.

Sagittarius Sign up for affordable activities and ward off tempting offers made by associates who are not looking out for your best interests. Bring about the changes that will benefit you.

Capricorn Problems will surface if you cannot come to an agreement with someone you live with or work alongside. Look for opportunities that allow you to do your own thing.

Aquarius Market what you have to offer. Your determination and enthusiasm will help you get the support you need to address a lingering concern. If change is required, make it happen.

Pisces A partnership can help you advance. Divvy up the workload. Using your skills to the fullest will result in recognition and opportunities. Romance is encouraged. EUGENIA LAST

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